



Missions for America

*Semper vigilans!  
Semper volans!*

## The Coastwatcher

Publication of the Thames River Composite Squadron  
Connecticut Wing  
Civil Air Patrol

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### *Erratum and Addendum*

Lt Col Carl Stidsen, CTWG Historian and Director (External) of Aerospace Education states that the Boeing B-50A Superfortress which made the first non-stop circumnavigation of the world was the Lucky Lady II, not the Lady Luck II. He is right.



*Lucky Lady II and tanker during one of its refuelings. (Photo: Museum of the USAF)*

The flight left Carswell AFB, Texas on 26 March, 1949 and returned 94 hours and 1 minute later. Four aerial refuelings were needed and the British developed gravity fed looped hose system carried by Boeing B-29M aircraft.



*Nose of Lucky Lady II bearing the insignia of the 43rd Bomb Group and the names of the round-the-world crew.*

### *Some Other Lucky Ladies*

Lucky Lady I was a B-29 that attempted a round-the-world trip in 1948.

Lucky Lady III was one of three B-52s which circumnavigated the globe in 1957.

### *And the Bone*

The fastest unofficial time around the world by an air breathing aircraft may be held by two North American Rockwell B-1Bs, named *Hellion* and *Global Power*, which in 1995 made the trip in 36hr 13min. carrying out three practice bombing runs along the way. Lt Col John deAndrade, TRCS Squadron Commander and a Bone pilot recalls crewing *Hellion* at one point in his career and may have also flown *Global Power*.

### *Records*

Official records are certified by the The *Fédération Aéronautique Internationale*. There are strict rules concerning take-off and landing points, types of aircraft, and routes of flight.

### **FRUIT SALES END**

The annual citrus fruit fundraising sales phase ended at the last meeting. Orders are being compiled and delivered in expected around 10 December.

Members will be needed to assist. Delivery will be to the Grasso Regional Technical School and our goods will be transferred to the Squadron. We will need trucks or vans and able-bodied help. Notification will be broadcast by e-mail.

### **CADET MEETING MINUTES**

*03 November, 2015*

*submitted by*

*C/CMSgt Daniel Hollingsworth*

The Cadets held a planning meeting to schedule activities for the next month.

### **SENIOR MEETING MINUTES**

*03 November, 2015*

*submitted by*

*Captain Philip Queeg*

The Senior members held a planning meeting,

Lt Col deAndrade discussed the fruit fundraiser, the upcoming holiday schedule, and URGED participation in the upcoming Unit Commander's and Teaching Leaders of Cadet courses which will be held at Camp Niantic.

Maj Farley discussed training schedules. A squadron SAREX will be held on 12 December and a Mountain Flying Training Course will be held on 17 November.

Lt Crandall announced that he had secured a supply of lumber for station improvements. Crandall also informed the planning team about the emphasis on retention of seniors, a subject

which was discussed at the recent Squadron Leader Course which he attended.

Maj Noniewicz explained problems which orientation flight scheduling which include inclement weather, aircraft availability, and Cadet willingness.

Lt Meers demonstrated the computerized Communications Training System which he has been developing. The system allows communication practice among aircrews, ground crews, and bases using realistic scenarios. A demonstration and practice run is scheduled for 1800 on 10 November. Interested parties are invited to attend.

Maj Farley flew a "VIP" flight with Patrick Desmaris, manager of the new Beacon Restaurant.

### **UNIT COMMANDER'S COURSE**

The course will be held at Camp Niantic on 5-6 December. The cost is \$25. For further information and an application form go to:

<http://www.ctwg.cap.gov/ucc-registration-form.html>

### **TRAINING LEADERS OF CADETS COURSE**

The course will be held at Camp Niantic on 5-6 December. The cost is \$25. For further information and an application form go to:

<http://ctwg.cap.gov/tlc-registration-form.html>

### **FAA SAFETY TEAM EVENTS**

#### **Event #1**

*Human Factors and Post-Crash Survival Training  
for Civil Aviators*

*Saturday, November 14, 2015, starting at 10:00*

*Eastern Standard Time*

*Skylark Airport*

Mike Ganis from Northstar Survival Solutions will present this FAASafety Seminar. Topics discussed will include Survival priorities and strategies, shelter craft, fire craft, signaling techniques, water acquisition and purification, knots and lashings, and medical considerations, Search and rescue cycle, how to become part of the team that is looking for you. You are not a victim, you are a first responder! Aviation specific topics include items designed for pilots and aircrew members who will face unique challenges as survivors of a small plane crash such as, aircraft egress, communications, ELTs & 406 MHz beacons, making the most of a crashed airframe, search & rescue considerations, medical issues, aircrew service survival kits, and aircrew cooperation.

Coffee and Donuts at 9:30 and BBQ Chicken Cookout to follow the seminar!

*One Credit for Basic Knowledge Topic 3*  
*One Credit for Advanced Knowledge Topic 2*

To enroll, go to:

[https://www.faasafety.gov/SPANS/event\\_publicregistration.aspx?eid=65601](https://www.faasafety.gov/SPANS/event_publicregistration.aspx?eid=65601)

### **Event #2**

*Proficiency Matters & The Battle of Britain Experience*

*Saturday, November 7th starting at 1000*  
*Meriden-Markham Airport*  
*One Credit for Basic Knowledge One*

Preparation is the key to success in any endeavor! It's no different in aviation. History has taught us that inadequate pre-flight planning can often lead to undesirable outcomes... including accidents! At this exclusive briefing we'll discuss how thorough preparation for a long cross country trip, along with recurrent training and proficiency made the difference in the life of one pilot who made it to the ground safely after the engine quit! Attend this meeting and hear this exciting story!

2015 is the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Britain – the most significant air superiority

contest in history. In this presentation Graeme J W Smith will outline the difficulties faced by the British in aircraft supply and pilot training as they struggled to make up their losses while facing daily odds of 5:1 against. Illustrated with photography from the present day of the South East of England where the Battle took place - the talk includes discussion of 1940 pilot flying equipment, Graeme's preparation to fly the Tiger Moth and Harvard trainers – culminating in flying the Supermarine Spitfire. Wing Commander Tom Neil – who was aged 19 during the Battle, provides veteran commentary (by video) as to how it really was in 1940.

To enroll, go to:

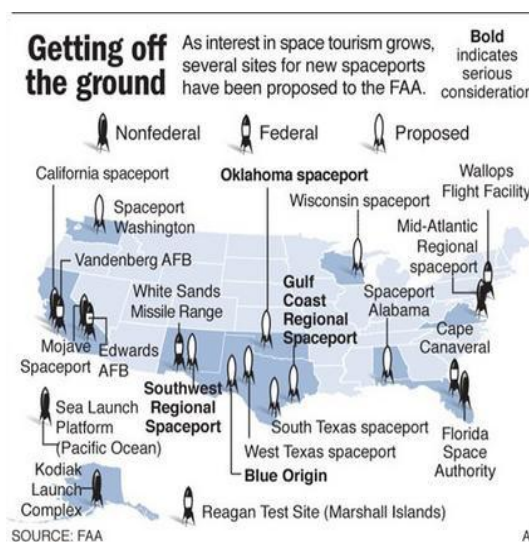
[https://www.faasafety.gov/SPANS/event\\_publicregistration.aspx?eid=65372](https://www.faasafety.gov/SPANS/event_publicregistration.aspx?eid=65372)

## **AEROSPACE CURRENT EVENTS**

### *Spaceports*

A recent announcement that NASA and Houston Texas will collaborate on a spaceport development at Ellington Field is indicative of the flurry of governmental and private interests which are creating U.S. spaceports.

A cursory glance at this activity indicates that some 20 or more "spaceports" or launch sites exist or are proposed in the United States.



The most well known are either NASA, USAF, or US Army facilities. Florida's Kennedy Space Flight Center is best known but the USAF maintains Cape Canaveral Air Force Station to the south from which they conduct their own launches.

The USAF maintains a launch site at Vandenberg AFB near San Bernadino, California. The location is particularly suitable for launching polar orbiting satellites since the initial trajectory is over the Pacific Ocean.

Edwards AFB serves as a Space Shuttle landing strip as well as a test facility for high performance aircraft.

Another Space Shuttle landing site is Northrop Strip at the Army's White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico. Many early rocket launches lifted off from White Sands.

A lesser known but very active base is NASA's Wallops Island Flight Facility on the Delmarva Peninsula near Chincoteague, Virginia.

Kwajelein Atoll in the Marshall Islands is a USAF facility for testing anti-ballistic missiles.

Alaska has two launching sites for rockets: Poker Flats Research Station run by the University of Alaska and Kodiak Launch Complex, a state facility.

Private corporations and states have teamed to gain approval or support for spaceport status. Scaled Composites operates from the Mojave Air and Space Port and Virgin Galactic and SpaceX have established Spaceport America between Las Cruces and Truth or Consequences, New Mexico. Midlands International Spaceport in Texas is not only home to the Commemorative Air Force but supports the rocket launches of XCOR.

The least known sites are scattered throughout the south and Great Plains. Cecil Field Florida, Chugwater, Wyoming, Corn Ranch near Van Horn, Texas, and Burns Flats, Oklahoma all are building or plan to build "spaceport

### *Planetary Lineup Visible*

This month, an astronomical spectacle will be visible before dawn in the eastern sky. Mars, Venus, and Jupiter can be viewed together. Around November 6th, a thin crescent moon will join the planetary convocation. Best viewing will be around 0300 E.S.T.

A pair of seven power binoculars will allow the observer to view Jupiter's four Galilean moon: Europa, Io, Callisto, and Ganymede.



## **AEROSPACE HISTORY**

### *Aerial Demonstration Teams* Part I

Air shows are one of the most popular public entertainment events world-wide and attendance can exceed a half million spectators. An air show can range from the mundane to the spectacular. A local show might headline a solo aerobatic performance, a sky-diving jump, a small group of static aircraft exhibits, and the usual purveyors of food and souvenirs familiar to those who visit county fairs. A large airshow features major aerobatic teams and large static exhibits of commercial and military aircraft.

The annual day-long Westerly, Rhode Island show will feature a warbird or two, Experimental Aircraft Association Young Eagles flights for kids,



and raffles and games. Money raised supports the Westerly Airport Association's scholarship fund. The biennial Farnborough International Airshow is a week-long trade show featuring the saltiest products of the commercial aviation and defense industries. Cities and military bases are keen supporters of airshows. The U.S.M.C extravaganza at Mirimar focuses on Marine aviation and its latest equipment but solo aerobatic stars such as Shawn Tucker will be present to entertain and thrill the crowd.

The larger shows feature one of the military or civilian aerial demonstration teams. In the United States, this means the Air Force Thunderbirds, the Navy Blue Angels, or the Breitling L-39 team. Sometimes, foreign teams such as the British Red Arrows or the Canadian Snowbirds will visit. Over fifty nations sponsor teams and one could travel to Argentina to view the Southern Cross Squadron fly their Sukhoi Su-29 Fulcrums, Africa for a presentation by the Moroccan *Marche Verte* in its Mudry CAP-232 aircraft, or the Kawasaki T-4 employed by a team, Blue Impulse, representing the Japanese Air Self Defense Forces.

Most familiar to *Coastwatcher* readers are the Thunderbirds and Blue Angels. This article will examine, in three parts, the history of these two premier U.S. teams as well as the Canadian Snowbirds and the British Red Arrows.

### *The Thunderbirds*



The Thunderbird tradition stems from some early Army Air Corps flight teams. The first team was the 1927 "Three Musketeers" from the Army's First Pursuit Group based in Montgomery, Alabama. Over the next two years, all of the original members were killed in crashes. Replacements included Charles Lindbergh and

Claire Chennault.

In 1932, Capt. Claire Chennault organized the "Three Men on the Flying Trapeze" which flew the Boeing P-12. They performed for four years until disbanded when Chennault and his two colleagues went to China to form the American Volunteer Group (Flying Tigers).



*The "Flying Trapeze" team: Lt. Haywood Hansell, Capt. Claire Chennault, Lt. Luke Williamson*

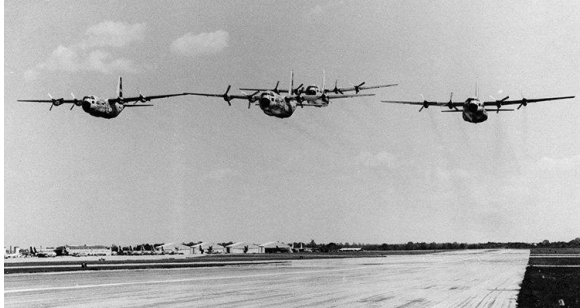
The end of World War II had the North American P-51 Mustang performing but heralded a new era for Air Force aerobatics with the introduction of the first jet teams. Various Air Force units formed "unofficial" demonstration teams. These included 1st Fighter Interceptor Group "Sabre Dancers," the "Comets" out of Osan Air Base in Korea, and the "Arctic Gladiators" based at Eilson AFB in Alaska. In 1957, the Colorado Air National Guard's "Minutemen" were designated the Precision Demonstration Team for the Air National Guard of the United States by the Secretary of the Air Force.



*Minutemen Sabres*

Two of the most unique teams did not fly fighters. The "Four Horseman" demonstrated short field first red, white and blue F-16A assigned to the Thunderbirds was delivered to Nellis AFB on Jun. 22, 1982. Due to the conversion to the new

aircraft, there were no official shows flown in 1982. The team flew the F-16 during the 1983 show season; making it the team's ninth aircraft and once again returning to flying a front-line fighter.



*The Four Horsemen (USAF photo)*



*Black Knights Sport Orange and Black Paint Scheme*

The USAF Fighter School at Williams AFB established the "Acrojets" in 1948 which first flew the Lockheed P-80 Shooting Star and T-33. In 1948, the USAF recognized them as an "official" unit. They introduced both the "bomb-burst" and "crossing" maneuvers which are now a standard part of the Thunderbird display. The team was disbanded in 1957.



*P-80B in Acrojet Livery*

The team which metamorphosed into the Thunderbirds, the "Skyblazers," formed in 1948 at Fürstenfeldbruck in Bavaria. Two of the pilots, lieutenants "Bill" and "Buck" Pattillo were identical twins. Initially flying the P-80 and F-84E, The Skyblazers last aircraft was the North American F-100 Super Sabre with which they introduced the use of red, white, and blue smoke.



*Skyblazer F-86F*

During 1953, the Air Force established another "official" team, the 3600th Air Demonstration Unit at Luke AFB in Arizona. They adopted the name "Thunderbirds," after the mythical creature associated with thunder and lightning. The Pattillo brothers, now both captains flew left and right wing on the new team.

Initially, they flew the Republic F-84 with the popular (and appropriate) name, Thunderjet. In 1955, they adopted Republic's swept wing F-84F Thunderstreak.



*The Straight Winged F-84 Thunderjet*





*A swept winged Luke F-84F Thunderstreak  
Bearing Thunderbird Crest*

A year later, they transitioned to the North American F-100C Super Sabre, their first supersonic aircraft and established a home at Nellis AFB. Some supersonic flights were flown at airshows but the practice was soon halted by Federal Aviation Agency edict.



*Super Sabre on Display at Museum of the USAF*

In the spring of 1964, six shows were flown with the Republic F-105B Thunderchief but after an accident, the team reverted back to the Super Sabre which they flew for the next 12 years



*Although it carries an F for fighter, the  
Thunderchief was designed as a nuclear bomber.*

In 1969, the Thunderbirds transitioned to the McDonnell Douglas F-4E Phantom II but the 1974 fuel crisis resulted in an embargo of oil by the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries resulted in a switch to the cheaper Northrop T-38 Talon. One Phantom used as much fuel as five Talons! Easier to maintain, the Talon was not a first line fighter but a high performance trainer.



*A T-38A, the Only Trainer Used by the  
Thunderbirds*



*Phantoms at the Reading Air Show*

The current aircraft is the General Dynamics F-16 versions which was brought on line in 1982. On the road, a Boeing C-17 Globemaster III supports the 130 airmen in the squadron.



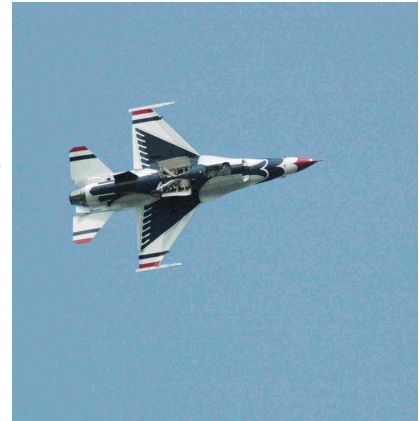
*F-16 Vipers at  
the McGuire  
Air Show*



*Thunderbirds Regrouping*

In 2015, the Thunderbirds performed in 71 shows at 39 different locations. The 2016 schedule has not been posted but the season will be similar. Over 50,000 attendees are expected at each weekend event.

*Solo Performer  
Rolls with  
Extended Gear*



*Six Ship Loop*

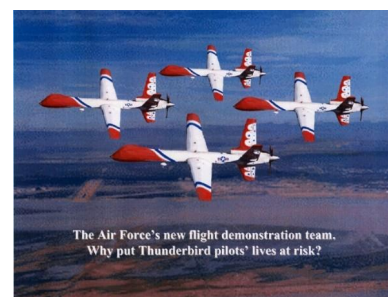


*Ground Teams Prepare the Birds*

The radical maneuvers flown are risky. In over a half century, and 4,000 airshows, 19 pilots have died in crashes. Two were killed at air shows and 17 died during training or flight tests.



*Preparing to Taxi*



*The Air Force's new flight demonstration team.  
Why put Thunderbird pilots' lives at risk?*

A mocking social critic, noting our national pursuit of a risk free society, recently suggested that a fainthearted, overcautious risk adverse Air Force bureaucrat might pressure the Air Force Secretariat to adopt a new aircraft for the Thunderbirds, the MQ-1 Predator. That will touch a raw nerve in the fighter pilot community.